

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 IO-11 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00

NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

SAM-01 /081 W

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O 291540Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3741

INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USINT BAGHDAD

C O N K O N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ALGIERS 0218

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPS PFOR AG SS

SUBJECT: SAHARA: ALGERIA PURSUES DIPLOMATIC OPTION

REF: ALGIERS 0198

1.SUMMARY: ALGERIANS WENT DIPLOMATIC ROUTE IN SAHARA
POLICY JAN. 28 WITH FLURRY OF MESSAGES TO CHIEFS OF
STATE, MEETINGS BETWEEN BOUMEDIENE AND ARAB EMISSARIES,
AND CALLING IN OF FOREIGN AMBASSADORS. SELF-DETERMINATION
WAS WATCHWORD IN MESSAGES AND GOA APPARENTLY CONSIDERS
REFERENDUM ONLY MEANS OF APPLYING THIS PINCIPLE.
LITTLE NEWS ON MILITARY FRONT THOUGH POLISARIO REP CLAIMS
MOROCCANS WITHDREW FOLLOWING CLASH WITH ALGERIANS JAN. 27-8. GIVEN
PREVIOUS LACK OF SUPPORT FOR ALGERIAN POSITION,
PARTICULARLY IN ARAB WORLD, DIFFICULT TO SEE HOW
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DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION ACCEPTABLE TO ALGERIANS CAN BE

REACHED AT THIS JUNCTURE. BOUMEDIENE'S MESSAGE Milder
THAN ALGERIAN MEDIA, WHICH ARE STRESSING IMPERIALIST,
AND AMERICAN, SUPPORT FOR MOROCCO IN SAHARA.
COUNCIL OF REVOLUTION'S ROLE BEING STRESSED. END SUMMARY

2. FOCUS OF ALGERIAZ A POLICY JAN. 28 WAS ON
DIPLOMACY. FOLLOWING ARE MAJOR GOA INITIATIVES:

A. MESSAGE TO CHIEFS OF STATE: JAN. 29 PRESS
PUBLISHED TEXTS OF MESSAGES WHICH IT SAID BOUMEDIENE
HAD SENT TO NON-ALIGNED, "SOCIALIST," AND WESTERN
CHIEFS OF STATE. (FOREIGN MINISTRY SAYS MESSAGES BEING
TRANSMITTED VIA ALGERIAN EMBASSIES.) MESSAGES NOTE:

I. GRAVITY OF SITUATION CREATED BY MOROCCAN
AND MAURITANIAN MILITARY ACTION IN SAHARA.

II. ALGERIA'S SUPPORT OF SELF-DETERMINATION AND
SANCTIONING OF THIS PRINCIPLE BY UN, OAU AND NON-ALIGNED.

III. MOROCCAN AND MAURITANIAN ABANDONMENT
OF ADHERENCE TO SELF-DETERMINATION PRINCIPLES.

IV. OBVIOUS DETERMINATION OF SAHRAOUI, LED
BY POLISARIO, TO RESIST IMPOSITION ON NEW COLONIALIST YOKE.

V. FULL MOROCCAN AND MAURITANIAN RESPONSIBILITY
FOR JAN. 27 CLASH WITH ALGERIAN ARMY UNIT IN SAHARA.

VI. NEED FOR NON-ALIGNED TO THROW FULL WEIGHT
BEHIND SAHRAOUI'S CAUSE.

B. SEPARATE MESSAGE TO SOCIALISTS: IN SEPARATE
MESSAGES MXSOCIALIST CHIEFS OF STATE, BOUMEDIENE
EMPHASIZED THEME THAT MOROCCO WAS PLAYING IMPERIALIST
GAME OF CREATING POINTS OF TENSION IN AFRICA.
"CONTRIBUTION WHICH YOUR COUNTRY WILL NOT FAIL TO
MAKE," BOUMEDIENE SAID, WILL LEAD TO PEACEFUL SOLUTION
OF PROBLEM.
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C. MESSAGE TO WESTERN GOVERNMENTS: IN SEPARATE
MESSAGES TO WESTERN CHIEFS OF STATE, BOUMEDIENE
EMPHASIZED ALGERIAN CONVICTION THAT WEST WILL NOT
REMAIN INDIFFERENT TO MASSACRE OF PEOPLE WHOSE ONLY
AMBITION IS TO DECOLONIZE ITSELF AND TO EXERCISE, "IN
FRAMEWORK OF FREE AND AUTHENTIC REFERENDUM," ITS RIGHTS
TO SELF-DETERMINATION.

D. AMBASSADORS CONVOKED: ON JAN. 28, FOREIGN
MINISTRY SECRETARY GENERAL BENHABYLES CALLED IN ARAB
AND AFRICAN AMBASSADORS, ARABS IN MORNING AND AFRICANS
IN AFTERNOON. ACCORDING TO LEBANESE CHARGE, BENHABYLES
STRESSED THAT AMGALA INCIDENT CREATED GRAVE DANGER IN
REGION, THAT ALGERIANS ANXIOUS TO AVOID HOSTILITIES
AGAINST MAGHREB BROTHER, THAT SITUATION CURRENTLY AT
TURNING POINT WITH THREAT OF ESCALATION LOOMING LARGE,
AND THAT ARABS HAD DUTY TO PRESSURE MOROCCO INTO
ACCEPTING SELF-DETERMINATION IN SAHARA. BENHABYLES
IS CONVOKING REPRESENTATIVES OF PERMANENT SECURITY
COUNCIL MEMBERS JAN. 29.

E. ARAB INITIATIVES: ON JAN. 28, IN ADDITION
TO RECEIVING IRAQI INFORMATION MINISTER AZIZ (REFTEL),
BOUMEDIENE ALSO MET WITH SYRIAN DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
HAYDAR AND GENERAL SHIHABI, CHIEF OF STAFF OF SYRIAN
ARMY. UNLIKE MEETING WITH AZIZ, AT WHICH ONLY FOREIGN
MINISTER BOUTEFLIKA PRESENT, COUNCIL OF REVOLUTION
MEMBERS TAYEBI, ABDELGHANI AND COL. BENCHERIF JOINED
BOUMEDIENE AND BOUTEFLIKA FOR SESSION WITH SYRIANS.
BOUMEDIENE ALSO REPORTED TO HAVE SPOKEN WITH EMIR OF
KUWAIT WHO URGED MODERATION.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ALGIERS 0218

F. HAYDAR AND AZIZ STATEMENTS: HAYDAR AND AZIZ DID NOT TIP THEIR HANDS IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS. HAYDAR SAID THAT HE HAD BROUGHT MESSAGE FROM ASAD ADDRESSING ITSELF TO PROBLEMS OF ARAB REGION AND PARTICULARLY TO MAGHREB. HE ADDED THAT CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN TWO REVOLUTIONS ON QUESTIONS OF INTEREST TO ARAB NATION WERE ENTIRELY NATURAL AND SAID THAT HE WAS ON HIS WAY TO RABAT TO DELIVER MESSAGE FROM ASAD TO KING HASSAN. FOR HIS PART, AZIZ SAID THAT IRAQI RELATIONS WITH ALGERIA WERE GOVERNED BY FEELINGS OF FRIENDSHIP, SOLIDARITY AND CONFIDENCE IN OBJECTIVES WHICH ALGERIA HAD SET ITSELF. WHEN ONE PART OF ARAB NATION CONFRONTED WITH EXCEPTIONAL SITUATION, IRAQ FEELS ITSELF CONCERNED, HE ADDED.

F. BOUTEFLIKA MESSAGES: BOUTEFLIKA ALSO SENT
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MESSAGES TO FOREIGN MINISTERS OF NON-ALIGNED, SOCIALIST AND WESTERN COUNTRIES ESSENTIALLY SIMILAR TO BOUMEDIENE'S

3. MILITARY SITUATION: LITTLE NEW INFORMATION ON MILITARY SITUATION. GOA HAS GIVEN NO FURTHER BULLETINS SINCE JAN. 28 ANNOUNCEMENT THAT FIGHTING WAS CONTINUING (REFTEL). PRESS CLAIMS THAT MOROCCAN AIR FORCE BOMBARDED THREE REFUGEE CAMPS IN "LIBERATED AREAS" OF SAHARA AROUND DAKHLA. FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL TOLD CHARGE JAN. 29 THAT HE IN DARK AS TO WHAT GOING ON AND IS FORCED TO RELY ON MEDIA FOR HIS NEWS.

4. AT PRESS CONFERENCE IN ALGIERS JAN. 29, POLISARIO STALWART BABA MISKE CLAIMED THAT MOROCCAN COLUMN HAD BEEN DISPATCHED FROM SMARA WITH SPECIFIC MISSION OF ATTACKING ALGERIAN ARMY ELEMENTS WHICH WERE ESCORTING CONVOY OF RELIEF SUPPLIES FOR MGALA REFUGEE CAMP. MOROCCANS, MISKE SAID, WERE FORCED TO RETIRE. MISKE ADDED THAT HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT PRESENT MILITARY SITUATION WAS GIVEN PRESENCE OF LARGE NUMBERS OF MOROCCAN TROOPS IN SAHARA.

5. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH FOREGOING SUGGESTS THAT ALGERIANS MAY BE PREPARED TO PURSUE DIPLOMATIC OPTION,

WE DO NOT SEE MUCH NEGOTIATING ROOM AT MOMENT.
IMPOSSIBLE TO TELL AT MOMENT WHETHER
THERE IS ANY SUBSTANCE IN ANY OF THESE ACTIVITIES OR
WHETHER ALGERIANS MERELY TOUCHING ALL BASES BEFORE MAKING
NEXT MOVE. GIVEN WHAT WE UNDERSTAND TO BE LACK OF
SUPPORT FOR ALGERIAN POSITION, PARTICULARLY IN ARAB
WORLD, IT DIFFICULT TO SEE HOW AT THIS JUNCTURE ANY
DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION ACCEPTABLE TO ALGERIANS COULD BE
REACHED.

6. BOUMEDIENE'S MESSAGE TO WESTERN CHIEFS OF STATE
STRONGLY SUGGESTS THAT, FOR ALGERIANS, SELF DETERMINATION
AND REFERENDUM ARE NOW SYNONOMOUS. IN PAST, THERE HAVE
BEEN HINTS THAT ALGERIANS MIGHT ACCEPT SOME FORM OF
"CONSULTATION" THROUGH TRIBAL LEADERS OR JEMAA.

7. TONE OF BOUMEDIENE'S MESSAGE Milder THAN MEDIA
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COMMENTARY ON SAHARA DEVELOPMENTS. LATTER PLAYING
UP MORE AND MORE THEME OF UNHOLY ALLIANCE OF MOROCCAN
INVOLVEMENT AND IMPERIALISM WHICH IS INCREASINGLY
IDENTIFIED AS AMERICAN. IN THIS CONNECTION, HASSAN'S
MEETINGS WITH COMSIXTHFLT HAVE BEEN PLAYED UP.

8. COUNCIL OF REVOLUTION HAS NOW MET, ALWAYS WITH
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, THREE TIMES WITHIN PAST TEN DAYS.
ALTHOUGH INDIVIDUAL COUNCIL MEMBERS HAVE PERIODICALLY
BEEN GIVEN IMPORTANT ROLES IN SAHARA AFFAIR, MANY
ALGERIANS HAVE TENDED TO DISCOUNT COUNCIL'S
INSTITUTIONAL ROLE AND TO DISMISS IT AS "HONORIFIC
VESTIGE." ITS RESURRECTION EVIDENTLY MEANT TO EMPHASIZE
COMMITMENT OF ENTIRE LEADERSHIP TO SAHARA POLICY. LYNE

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